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Sixty-third session
Agenda item 20
The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Letter dated 27 October 2008 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to address you concerning item 20 on the agenda of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, to be discussed on 10 November 2008.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 58/117 and 58/239, I made a report to the Assembly on the situation in Central America during the sixtieth session (A/60/218). While there was no further request from the Assembly that I present a new report on this agenda item, I wish to provide a brief update on one pending issue on which important progress has been made. Specifically, through this letter, I wish to update the General Assembly on the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala, known by its Spanish acronym CICIG.

In resolution 58/239, the General Assembly took note with satisfaction of the intention of the Government of Guatemala to establish a Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Groups and Clandestine Security Apparatuses, and urged me to support that initiative with a view to its prompt implementation. In my report to the Assembly at its sixtieth session (A/60/218), I informed the Assembly that in a setback, a 2004 agreement between the Government of Guatemala and the United Nations for the establishment of the Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Groups and Clandestine Security Apparatuses had failed to achieve parliamentary ratification. I further reported that the Government had announced that it would promote a new agreement to address impunity.

In my report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the work of the Organization (A/62/1), I informed the Assembly that a new agreement to this end had indeed been reached between the Government of Guatemala and the United Nations. The agreement was signed on 12 December 2006 ("Agreement between the United Nations and the State of Guatemala on the establishment of an International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala, CICIG") and ratified by the Guatemalan Congress on 1 August 2007. The Government of Guatemala notified the Organization on 4 September 2007 that internal procedures for approval and ratification had been completed. Thus, the agreement to create CICIG was registered under article 102 of the Charter and entered into force on that date. I would like to

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further inform you that, pursuant to article 5 of the agreement, I appointed Carlos Castresana of Spain as the Commissioner of CICIG, as announced on 17 September 2007. In my most recent report on the work of the Organization (A/63/1), I noted that with the establishment of CICIG, we would be involved in an innovative attempt to dismantle criminal groups whose actions threatened to erode hard-fought gains in the peace process.

The United Nations has taken on this initiative at the explicit request of the State of Guatemala. The organization has worked closely with three successive Guatemalan Governments to establish CICIG and, most recently, to ensure its effective functioning.

Under the terms of the agreement, CICIG has as its central objective to support, strengthen and assist Guatemalan State institutions responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes allegedly committed by illegal security forces and clandestine security organizations and other criminal conduct related to these entities. This assistance to the justice sector is informed by the conviction that the impunity engendered by these groups seriously undermines fundamental human rights. Thus, through its actions, CICIG will strengthen the capacity of Guatemala to effectively fulfil its obligations under international human rights instruments to which it is a party, as well as national human rights instruments, including the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights of 29 March 1994, which forms an integral part of the peace accords.

To this end, the mandated functions of CICIG include determining the existence of said illegal security groups and clandestine security structures; collaborating with the State in the dismantling of such groups and structures; promoting the investigation, criminal prosecution and punishment of crimes committed by their members; and recommending to the State the adoption of public policies for eradicating such groups and structures and preventing their re-emergence. CICIG may also file criminal and/or administrative complaints with the relevant authorities against civil servants who contribute to impunity by interfering with the exercise of the functions of the Commission. CICIG has the power to provide technical advice to the relevant State institutions for investigation and criminal prosecution, file criminal complaints with the relevant authorities and join a criminal proceeding as a private prosecutor (*querellante adhesivo*) in all cases within its jurisdiction, working within the Guatemalan legal framework.

The agreement establishes CICIG as an independent, non-United Nations organ, whose expenses are to be met through voluntary contributions from the international community. For the purpose of channelling those contributions and ensuring transparency and accountability, a trust fund administered by the United Nations Development Programme was established on 3 October 2007. The Government of Guatemala, for its part, is committed to providing the Commission with office space and other in kind contributions, as well as to taking all necessary measures to ensure the security and protection of Commission staff. To date, $26 million has been raised from 12 Member States and the European Union, covering more than 90 per cent of the projected two-year budget. Other Member States have seconded security staff, criminal investigators and legal experts. CICIG operates today with a staffing level of approximately 115 international and Guatemalan national staff, assigned to both professional and administrative functions.

In the initial months, the United Nations, in coordination with the Government of Guatemala, focused its efforts on the speedy establishment and full functioning of the Commission. To that end, I circulated a memorandum to heads of all pertinent United Nations departments, offices, programmes and specialized agencies directing them to extend their full cooperation and support to CICIG, as one of the most recent additions to the Organization's special mechanisms designed to promote the rule of law.

During the first year of its two-year mandate, CICIG has made significant advances. Given the legitimacy that CICIG has constructed in Guatemala, it has received information from numerous sources, which has permitted progress in mapping the clandestine structures that are at the centre of its mandate. In addition, CICIG is currently investigating 15 high-impact cases, most often in coordination with the Office of the Public Prosecutor of Guatemala. Technical assistance and advice is provided on a permanent basis to that Office. Similar efforts to provide technical support are under way with the Ministry of the Interior and the National Civilian Police, and initial discussions have been held with the judiciary to establish a framework for collaboration.

In the exercise of its mandated powers, CICIG has also identified and provided to the competent authorities the names of those civil servants who have been derelict in their duty or have obstructed the work of CICIG, whether by action or by omission. These efforts have served the State in its attempts to identify and sanction officials who are aiding impunity. Finally, CICIG has analysed national legislation on security, criminal law and criminal procedure in the light of international best practices. It has identified legal and regulatory changes needed to better protect the rights guaranteed in the Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, remove obstacles and fill legal gaps that interfere with the prompt administration of justice. As a result, the Commission recently submitted to the President of Guatemala a series of reform proposals for transmission as draft laws to the Congress of Guatemala.

At the same time, I note with satisfaction that the Government of Guatemala has taken important measures in recent months to strengthen the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the Ministry of the Interior and ensure close collaboration with CICIG. Given that coordination between CICIG and these State institutions is a vital and necessary element for the success of CICIG, I am grateful for this clear indication by the Government of its strong commitment to the fight against impunity.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the many Member States who have already provided support to CICIG through their financial contributions, by seconding expert staff and with their interest and political accompaniment of this ambitious and difficult initiative.

CICIG has many challenges ahead. The most complex of these could arise as investigations and court proceedings advance in cases that may well touch powerful criminal interests, potentially with transnational implications. Already in its first year, CICIG has identified some key operational concerns that must be addressed in order to improve the chances for its success. These include strengthening security, reinforcing the framework for staff protection and immunities, facilitating the transnational exchange of information pertinent to its cases and creating effective mechanisms for witness protection. It is my strong hope that we will all be able to

work together — CICIG, the United Nations, Guatemala and other Member States — to address these issues with alacrity and creativity.

Promotion of the rule of law is fundamental to the mission of the United Nations and the fulfilment of the obligations of our Charter. CICIG is constructing one innovative way forward. I will continue to direct all pertinent United Nations departments, offices, programmes and specialized agencies to extend their full cooperation and support to CICIG, particularly addressing the aforementioned challenges, and I would invite Member States to provide their utmost support to ensure its success.

I should like to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 20.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

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Security Council

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Agenda item 45
Culture of peace

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 28 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Astana Declaration adopted by the participants of the ministerial conference on "Common world: progress through diversity", held in Kazakhstan on 17 October 2008.

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Byrganym **Aitimova**

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Annex to the letter dated 28 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Astana Declaration

We, the official representatives of the countries and international organizations of the conference on "Common world progress through diversity", held on 17 October 2008 in Astana,

Recognizing the importance of diversity at the global and national levels, within civilizations, cultures and religions, as well as the multiple identities of individuals,

Welcoming the efforts of international, regional and subregional organizations and forums and States aimed at supporting dialogue and achieving harmony between cultures, religions, beliefs, civilizations and peoples for the maintenance of sustainable progress and international peace, justice, security and stability,

Highlighting our common aim to preserve tolerance, dialogue and cooperation based on mutual trust and understanding and the accentuation of the common values of various cultures, religions and beliefs,

Recognizing that international relations should be guided by fundamental principles that underpin the corpus of human rights, democracy, the rule of law, equity, participation and non-discrimination at both the national and international levels,

Reaffirming that all human rights are universal, interdependent and interrelated,

Reaffirming also that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems,

Recognizing that globalization, while opening up new opportunities for socio-economic development, presents a challenge to cultural and religious identities of nations,

Rejecting any form of tension based on religious, belief, cultural and civilizational differences and their use for fuelling hatred, xenophobia and confrontation,

Reaffirming the pivotal role of education and culture for understanding, solidarity and social cohesion, ensuring the inclusion of youth and the participation of civil society in various related activities,

Underlining the importance of further cooperation between Governments and citizens of countries in those parts of the world that are known as the Muslim World and the West in terms of strengthening dialogue and understanding on various levels,

Being aware that responsible use of freedom of expression and access to accurate and unbiased information can promote cross-cultural and inter-civilization relationships,

Welcoming the Alliance of Civilizations and other existing initiatives and considering them as an effective mechanism for promoting further understanding and respect between cultures and civilizations,

1. *Stress* the need to encourage permanent contacts and dialogue within and between Muslim and Western societies at political, social, cultural, inter-religious and other levels;

2. *Agree* on the need to continue and enhance dialogue between relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, such as the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Organization of American States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization;

3. *Call on* all States to recognize that dialogue should reflect the multiple identities of peoples and individuals, but that within that context inter- and intra-religious dialogue can be used to promote understanding between civilizations;

4. *Underscore* the important role and the rights of women, and the application of a gender perspective as a cross-cutting issue in the process of realizing equalities and the right to development;

5. *Call on* countries to take appropriate measures against acts of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination and violence committed on the basis of ethnic or religious dislike in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law and human rights;

6. *Reaffirming* that each country has the primary responsibility for its own development and recognition of national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding development opportunities;

7. *Confirm* that education and information are key factors to avoid stereotypes and any form of prejudice and misconceptions of different cultures and encourage actors in the political sphere, educational institutions and the media to promote intercultural dialogue;

8. *Encourage* the studying and teaching of the history of civilizations and the development of cultural itineraries highlighting the cultural heritage of those civilizations;

9. *Uphold* youth meetings and exchange programmes to promote cross-cultural and inter-civilization dialogue, peace and democratic participation among young people;

10. *Encourage* media professionals to establish a group of journalists to act as advocates for promoting inter-civilization dialogue, taking into account the recommendations already made by related forums such as the global inter-media dialogue and the Alliance of Civilizations, including but not limited to journalistic exchange;

11. *Welcome* the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 2 and 3 April 2009;

12. *Welcome also* the initiative of King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz to convene the Madrid World Conference on Dialogue for interfaith and intercultural dialogue, as well as the holding of the high-level session of the United Nations General Assembly to support the initiative;

13. *Express* our appreciation for the hospitality, good arrangements and warm welcome made by the Government of Kazakhstan and its people.

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Agenda item 131
Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Revised estimates relating to the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 for the biennium 2008-2009

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report reflects additional resource requirements in the amount of $14,979,500, net of staff assessment, over the initial appropriation for the biennium 2008-2009, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/230 for the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. The increased requirements relate primarily to the revision of the trial schedule for 2009 as a result of the recent apprehension of certain high-level accused as well as the continuation into 2009 of some of the trials that were originally planned for completion by the end of 2008. The Assembly is requested to approve an additional appropriation for the biennium 2008-2009 in the amount of $16,043,500 gross ($14,979,500 net) to the Special Account for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 62/230, decided to appropriate to the Special Account for the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 a total amount of $347,566,900 gross ($316,472,100 net) for the biennium 2008-2009.

2. In paragraph 7 of his report to the General Assembly on the budget for the Tribunal for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/374), the Secretary-General indicated that a number of external factors beyond the Tribunal's control can and will have a major impact on the anticipated completion dates of trials. He also indicated that the trial schedule and the related budget proposal for the biennium 2008-2009 did not take into account resource requirements related to the trials of the four fugitives (Karadžić, Mladić, Župljanin and Hadžić) and that, accordingly, estimates in respect of those fugitives would be addressed in the context of revised estimates as and when the fugitives were apprehended.

3. Since the approval of the budget for the Tribunal for the biennium 2008-2009, there have been two developments that have had an impact on the trial schedule, necessitating the current request for additional resources. First, two of the four fugitives who were at large at the time of budget preparation, Stojan Župljanin and Radovan Karadžić, were apprehended and transferred to the Tribunal on 11 June and 30 July 2008, respectively. Secondly, for reasons beyond the Tribunal's control, the trial schedule for 2009 has been revised to reflect changes in the completion dates of a number of first-instance trials as compared with the schedule available at the time of the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

II. Revised programme of work for 2009

4. The approved budget for the Tribunal was prepared with reference to the trial schedule applicable at the time of the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009. That trial schedule had contemplated the undertaking of seven concurrent trials during 2008 and the reduction of trial activity during 2009, with five trials running by the end of October 2009 and only two extending into 2010. During the biennium 2008-2009, the Tribunal was expected to hear 14 first-instance trials, involving 37 accused, and to complete 12 cases, involving 35 accused.

5. However, the estimates of the time frame for the completion of the ongoing trials have been revised in the light of progress made since the submission of the initial budget proposals for the biennium 2008-2009. It should be noted that the anticipated commencement and completion dates of trials are based on current estimates, which are subject to change due to factors beyond the control of the Tribunal, such as the health of the accused, the number of interlocutory appeals submitted during the proceedings, requests for replacement of defence counsel and self-representation, unforeseen disclosure of materials and other motions affecting the proceedings, such as the availability of witnesses to certify statements and provide testimony.

6. The original trial schedule of the Tribunal contemplated a reduction in trial activity during 2009. Accordingly, the Tribunal originally anticipated that during

2009 it would be conducting trials and writing judgements in the following nine cases involving 19 accused persons:

(a) Cases in which judgement will be completed: seven cases, involving 17 accused (*Gotovina et al.* (3 accused); *Lukić and Lukić* (2 accused); *Popović et al.* (7 accused); *Šešelj* (1 accused); *Stanišić and Simatović* (2 accused); *Perišić* (1 accused); and *M. Stanišić* (1 accused));

(b) Cases in which trials will be ongoing: two cases, involving 2 accused (*Tolimir* and *Đorđević*).

7. As a result of the apprehension of two high-level fugitives, the Tribunal's trial schedule had to be revised in order to accommodate their trials. The *Stojan Župljanin* case (which was recently joined with the *M. Stanišić* case) and the *Radovan Karadžić* case are expected to commence early in 2009, subject to the availability of judges and courtroom space. Consequently, the Tribunal now anticipates that there will be 15 cases on trial, involving 39 accused, during the biennium 2008-2009, as compared with the 14 cases, involving 37 accused, originally forecast at the time of budget preparation.

8. Furthermore, because of the lengthening of the time frame for completion originally forecast, three first-instance cases (*Prlić et al.*, *Stanišić and Simatović* and *Perišić*) originally scheduled for completion in 2009 are now due for completion in 2010. The Tribunal now expects to complete 9 cases, involving 26 accused, during the biennium 2008-2009, as compared with to 12 cases, involving 35 accused, as set out in the original trial schedule.

9. During 2009, the Tribunal will be conducting trials and writing judgements in 11 cases, involving 27 accused persons, as detailed below:

(a) Cases in which trials will be ongoing: six cases, involving 13 accused (*Perišić* (1 accused); *Karadžić* (1 accused); *Tolimir* (1 accused); *Stanišić and Simatović* (2 accused); *M. Stanišić and Župljanin* (2 accused); and *Prlić et al.* (6 accused));

(b) Cases in which judgement will be completed: five cases, involving 14 accused (*Gotovina et al.* (3 accused); *Lukić and Lukić* (2 accused); *Popović et al.* (7 accused); *Šešelj* (1 accused); and *Đorđević* (1 accused)).

10. In summary, the changes in the trial schedule coupled with the arrest of two fugitives since the time of the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009 have had a significant impact on the trial workload for 2009. While significant progress in trial proceedings has been made in recent years, factors over which the Tribunal has no control continue to have an impact on the estimated completion dates of trials. The Tribunal is doing its utmost to expedite the proceedings while at the same time ensuring the rights of the accused to due process. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/374), efforts have been made and continue to be made by all three organs (the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry) to increase the pace of trial activity and improve judicial efficiency.

11. The budget of the Tribunal is mainly trial-driven. The greater the number of trials running at the same time, the greater the number of staff in the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry required to support the proceedings and act as a backstop for the substantive staff. In the schedule used for the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009, the Tribunal anticipated a decrease in trial

activity as from the third quarter of 2009, following the completion of first-instance trials. It was anticipated that, as at the end of October 2009, the Tribunal would be running five trials concurrently, of which three were due to be completed by the end of December 2009, with the remaining two trials extending into 2010. However, under the latest trial schedule, six trials will be running at the same time to the end of December 2009, with all of them continuing into 2010. On the basis of the new trial schedule, the Tribunal anticipates that there will not be a decrease in trial activity in 2009 as originally planned, with the pace of trial activity in 2009 remaining unaltered at 2008 levels.

III. Status report on trials and referrals as at 31 August 2008

Boškoski and Tarčulovski

12. It was forecast that the judgement in the *Boškoski and Tarčulovski* trial would be issued in April 2008. The judgement was issued on 10 July 2008. The delay of approximately two and a half months was attributable to a delay in the presentation of prosecution evidence, which was due, in part, to the temporary unavailability of an important prosecution witness.

Haradinaj et al.

13. It was forecast that the judgement in the *Haradinaj et al.* trial would be issued in February 2008. It was in fact issued shortly thereafter, on 3 April 2008.

Delić

14. The date of delivery for the *Delić* trial judgement was forecast as the end of June 2008. Instead, it was issued on 15 September 2008. The delay resulted from particularly complicated judicial deliberations on the outcome of the case.

Perišić

15. The *Perišić* trial had not been assigned a fixed slot in the original trial schedule. It was subsequently scheduled to commence in July 2008. The date was revised to October 2008 owing to the need to secure the extension of the terms of office for ad litem judges to be able to sit on the case. Additionally, lead defence counsel withdrew from the case at a late stage.

Gotovina et al.

16. The *Gotovina et al.* trial had not been assigned a fixed spot in the original schedule. It was subsequently assigned to follow the *Haradinaj et al.* trial, and commenced in March 2008.

Lukić and Lukić

17. The *Lukić and Lukić* case was provisionally scheduled to commence in February 2009 following the *Prlić et al.* case. In fact, it commenced seven months earlier, in July 2008, taking the slot vacated by the delayed *Stanišić and Simatović* trial (see para. 19 below).

Popović et al.

18. It was forecast that *Popović et al.* would be completed by the end of April 2009. The estimate has since been revised to the end of August 2009, primarily because of more detailed information concerning the number of defence witnesses and exhibits given by defence teams after the close of the prosecution case, allowing for a more accurate determination of the length of the multiple defence cases.

J. Stanišić and Simatović

19. The *Stanišić and Simatović* trial had not been assigned a fixed spot in the original trial schedule. It was subsequently scheduled to start in March 2008. This was revised to April 2008 owing to the poor health of one of the accused, Stanišić. Pursuant to a decision of the Appeals Chamber, proceedings were adjourned for a minimum period of three months late in May 2008 owing to those health concerns and remain adjourned at present, pending a review of medical reports.

Prlić et al.

20. At the time of the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009, it was anticipated that the *Prlić et al.* case would continue until January 2009. The end date was subsequently revised to March 2010 in order to allow an additional 23 hours for the prosecution to finish presentation of its evidence (covering six accused and more than 70 crime sites) and sufficient time for the Chamber to adjudicate the various motions for acquittal following the close of the prosecution case and for the various defence teams to prepare their respective cases, and to incorporate a revised estimate of the time needed to complete the defence cases based on more detailed information concerning the number of defence witnesses and exhibits given by defence teams after the close of the prosecution case.

Šešelj

21. There has been no change in the *Šešelj* trial schedule and it is due to be completed in September 2009.

Milutinović et al.

22. The estimate for the completion of the case was September 2008. The date has been revised to late November/early December 2008, as the final close of evidence was later than anticipated owing to problems in securing the attendance of a Chamber witness, who eventually testified in July following subpoenas and the President's referral of Serbia to the Security Council for its non-cooperation in securing the attendance of the witness in question.

Đorđević

23. The *Đorđević* trial was provisionally scheduled to commence in May 2009, following the *Popović et al.* trial. While it does not have a fixed spot in the trial schedule, it is noted that the start date of the trial, to follow *Popović et al.*, has been revised to September 2009.

M. Stanišić and Župljanin

24. The *Stanišić* trial had not been assigned a fixed slot in the original trial schedule, and at that time Župljanin remained a fugitive. Župljanin was subsequently arrested. While the trial schedule did not fix a trial slot for either of those cases, the trials were subsequently joined together, which should have the effect of reducing the trial time forecast from a total of 24 months to 17 months.

Tolimir

25. The *Tolimir* case was provisionally scheduled to begin in March 2009 after the trial that was to follow the *Haradinaj et al* trial. The *Tolimir* trial does not have a fixed slot in the revised trial schedule, following a reorganization of the allocation of trials to the Chambers, necessitated in part by the arrival of Župljanin and Karadžić and the need to integrate *Lukić and Lukić* into the trial schedule.

Karadžić

26. Karadžić was a fugitive at the time of the preparation of the budget for the biennium 2008-2009. No fixed trial slot has yet been assigned to this trial.

IV. Resource requirements

Table 1
Resource requirements by component
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Component	*2008-2009 initial appropriation*	*Change*	*2008-2009 estimate*
Expenditures			
Chambers	13 119.9	200.2	13 320.1
Office of the Prosecutor	87 709.3	5 917.2	93 626.5
Registry	242 350.4	9 926.1	252 276.5
Records management and archives	4 387.3	—	4 387.3
Total requirements (gross)	**347 566.9**	**16 043.5**	**363 610.4**
Income			
Income from staff assessment	31 094.8	1 064.0	32 158.8
Total (net)	**316 472.1**	**14 979.5**	**331 451.6**

Table 2
Resource requirements by object of expenditure
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Component	*2008-2009 initial appropriation*	*Change*	*2008-2009 estimate*
Posts	162 119.7	—	162 119.7
Other staff costs	39 214.7	8 750.3	47 965.0
Non-staff compensation	12 934.1	200.2	13 134.3
Consultants and experts	857.7	—	857.7
Travel	5 513.4	604.8	6 118.2
Contractual services	60 254.1	5 424.2	65 678.3
General operating expenses	29 140.8	—	29 140.8
Hospitality	16.3	—	16.3
Supplies and materials	2 248.7	—	2 248.7
Furniture and equipment	3 561.8	—	3 561.8
Improvement of premises	320.4	—	320.4
Grants and contributions	290.4	—	290.4
Staff assessment	31 094.8	1 064.0	32 158.8
Total (gross)	**347 566.9**	**16 043.5**	**363 610.4**
Income			
Income from staff assessment	31 094.8	1 064.0	32 158.8
Total (net)	**316 472.1**	**14 979.5**	**331 451.6**

27. The overall level of resources approved for the biennium 2008-2009 reflected a reduction in posts and non-post resources in line with the projected reduction in trial activity as from the third quarter of 2009. Based on revised trial projections, the Tribunal anticipates full first-instance trial activity throughout 2009, with the pace of trial activity in 2009 remaining unchanged vis-à-vis the 2008 level.

28. Based on projected reduced trial activity at the time of the finalization of the budget proposals, the approved budget of the Tribunal for the biennium 2008-2009 provided for the gradual phasing out of functions of 258 posts in 2009, as follows: (a) the abolition of 100 posts, effective 1 August 2009 (3 P-5, 8 P-4, 19 P-3, 4 P-2, 61 General Service (Other level) and 5 Security Service); and (b) the abolition of 158 posts, effective 1 November 2009 (4 P-5, 15 P-4, 31 P-3, 23 P-2, 70 General Service (Other level) and 15 Security Service). However, it is recalled that, as indicated in paragraph 25 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/374), the abolition of the 258 posts would be effective as at 1 January 2009 and the related funding for the posts provided through general temporary assistance for the continuation of the functions through the period stated above in order to ensure that the Tribunal has the flexibility to accelerate or decelerate the phasing out of individual posts and to provide it with an opportunity to more closely align staff requirements with trial-servicing needs during the critical period of the completion phase.

29. Current projections, including in connection with the recently arrested fugitives, reflect the conduct of seven trials through the end of 2009. Accordingly, the Tribunal would require the continuation up to 31 December 2009 of the functions of the 258 posts earmarked for abolition in the second half of 2009 in order to ensure the steady progress and completion of trial activities and enable the Trial Chambers to optimally utilize courtroom and judicial capacity. Funding for the continuation of the aforementioned functions would be provided through general temporary assistance.

30. In addition, a number of non-post items in the approved budget were adjusted in 2009 to account for the reduced trial activity in 2009. In view of the revised trial projections, additional provisions are requested for the following non-post items: salaries and allowances of judges, general temporary assistance, temporary assistance for translation and interpretation, verbatim reporting, travel of staff, travel of witnesses and defence counsel fees, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

A. Chambers

31. On 5 June and 1 September 2008, the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia requested the Secretary-General to transmit letters to the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly for their consideration and necessary action regarding his request to extend the terms of some of the judges to allow the completion of trial work at the earliest date possible as a result of new developments that would have an impact on the trial schedule, necessitating additional resources (see A/63/458-S/2008/621, annexes I and II). The Security Council, in its resolution 1837 (2008), extended the terms of office of the judges concerned in order to enhance the effectiveness of trial proceedings and contribute towards ensuring the implementation of the completion strategy. By its decision 63/402, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Secretary-General to authorize the extension of the terms of office of the permanent and ad litem judges of the Tribunal.

Table 3
Requirements by object of expenditure
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Assessed budget

Component	*2008-2009 initial appropriation*	*Change*	*2008-2009 estimate*
Non-staff compensation	12 934.1	200.2	13 134.3
Consultants and experts	34.1	—	34.1
Travel of representatives	151.7	—	151.7
Total (gross)	**13 119.9**	**200.2**	**13 320.1**

Resource requirements

Salaries and allowances of judges

32. The estimated additional requirements of $200,200 under this heading would provide for honorariums for three ad litem judges for an additional 11 work-months to support the additional trials in accordance with the revised trial schedule.

B. Office of the Prosecutor

Table 4
Requirements by object of expenditure
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Assessed budget

Component	*2008-2009 initial appropriation*	*Change*	*2008-2009 estimate*
Posts	55 034.7	—	55 034.7
Other staff costs	20 307.1	4 971.7	25 278.8
Consultants and experts	376.2	—	376.2
Travel	1 149.1	316.0	1 465.1
Contractual services	120.2	—	120.2
Staff assessment	10 722.0	629.5	11 351.5
Total (gross)	**87 709.3**	**5 917.2**	**93 626.5**
Income			
Income from staff assessment	10 722.0	629.5	11 351.5
Total (net)	**76 987.3**	**5 287.7**	**82 275.0**

Resource requirements

Other staff costs

33. The additional amount of $4,971,700 under general temporary assistance is required as follows:

(a) The provision of $3,652,900 would provide for the continuation of the functions for an additional five months of the 65 positions (3 P-5, 8 P-4, 12 P-3, 1 P-2 and 41 General Service (Other level)) and an additional two months of the 65 positions (4 P-5, 14 P-4, 18 P-3, 7 P-2 and 22 General Service (Other level)) that are currently funded to 31 July and 31 October 2009, respectively. The funding through general temporary assistance for the above-mentioned functions to 31 December 2009 is commensurate with the revised level of judicial activities during 2009;

(b) The provision of $1,318,800 would provide for 336 work-months of temporary assistance at the Professional and General Service levels in order to support the two new trials (*Župljanin* and *Karadžić*) and the revised trial schedule in 2009. This would include support in the areas of pre-trial and trial peak support, document translation and indexing and research and analysis.

Travel

34. The additional provision of $316,000 would cover additional requirements needed to support the trials of the two accused arrested in 2008 (Župljanin and Karadžić). A total of 48 missions lasting between 5 and 10 days by an average of two staff of the Trial section are anticipated for 2009. It is anticipated that 32 of those missions will be to the former Yugoslavia, 13 to European countries and 3 to North America. The missions will allow the Office of the Prosecutor to conduct the prosecution of the two additional cases in the most efficient manner through, inter alia, the proofing of prosecution witnesses in order to produce the most effective presentation during the actual trial (including testimony taken under rule 92 bis), review of new documentation and material made available by the local authorities and the collection of new evidence in support of the counts reflected in the amended indictment for Karadžić.

Staff assessment

35. Staff assessment costs are estimated at $629,500 relating to the general temporary assistance positions reflected in paragraph 33 above. Those costs will be offset by a corresponding amount under income from staff assessment.

C. Registry

Table 5
Requirements by object of expenditure
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Assessed budget

Component	*2008-2009 initial appropriation*	*Change*	*2008-2009 estimate*
Posts	107 085.0	—	107 085.0
Other staff costs	18 015.5	3 778.6	21 794.1
Consultants and experts	389.7	—	389.7
Travel	4 186.3	288.8	4 475.1
Contractual services	56 722.7	5 424.2	62 146.9
General operating expenses	29 140.8	—	29 140.8
Hospitality	16.3	—	16.3
Supplies and materials	2 248.7	—	2 248.7
Furniture and equipment	3 561.8	—	3 561.8
Improvement of premises	320.4	—	320.4
Grants and contributions	290.4	—	290.4
Staff assessment	20 372.8	434.5	20 807.3
Total	**242 350.4**	**9 926.1**	**252 276.5**
Income			
Income from staff assessment	20 372.8	434.5	20 807.3
Total requirements (net)	**221 977.6**	**9 491.6**	**231 469.2**

Resource requirements

Other staff costs

36. The additional amount of $3,778,600 is required as set out below:

(a) General temporary assistance ($2,980,900) resources would be required as follows:

(i) The provision of $2,400,500 would provide for the continuation of the functions for an additional five months of the 35 positions (7 P-3, 3 P-2, 20 General Service (Other level) and 5 Security Service) and an additional two months of the 93 positions (1 P-4, 13 P-3, 16 P-2, 48 General Service (Other level) and 15 Security Service) that are currently funded to 31 July and 31 October 2009, respectively. The funding through general temporary assistance for the above-mentioned functions to 31 December 2009 is commensurate with the revised level of judicial activities during 2009;

(ii) The provision of $580,400 would provide for 149 work-months at the Professional and General Service levels, which are required as a result of the arrest of two fugitives and increased judicial activity in 2009. This includes the continuation of critical positions originally earmarked for abolition within the Chambers Legal Support Section, interpretation at field offices and other projects in the Registry including the Victims and Witnesses Section and the judicial database project;

(b) In the light of the additional trial activity during 2009, temporary assistance for meetings ($797,700) would be required for the following:

(i) Temporary assistance for meetings. An additional provision of $618,500, representing 1,438 workdays, will be required under this heading in order to support the additional requirements for interpretation services in the three working languages, namely, English, French and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, resulting from the revised trial schedule in 2009;

(ii) Temporary assistance for translation. Estimates in the amount of $179,200 would be required to obtain the services of translators/revisers for translating legal documents submitted by the Office of the Prosecutor, the Registry and the Chambers in various language combinations (English, French and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian). This represents 450 workdays of temporary assistance, which is required in order to support the additional workload resulting from the revised trial schedule in 2009.

Travel

37. Following the arrest of two fugitives and changes to the trial schedule for 2009, the Tribunal anticipates that an additional 178 witnesses and support persons/dependants will travel to The Hague during 2009 for hearings and trials. The estimate in the amount of $288,800 includes cost of travel, board and lodging and a daily allowance for witnesses to cover incidentals in The Hague.

Contractual services

38. Owing to increased trial activity, an additional amount of $5,424,200 under this category would provide for the following:

(a) Defence counsel fees ($4,878,500). The estimates include additional fees and travel expenses payable during 2009 to defence counsel assigned by the Registrar to represent indigent accused persons;

(b) Contractual verbatim reporting ($545,700). The provision under this heading would cover English and French court reporting services for oral proceedings in courtrooms as well as plenary sessions of judges, and other meetings requiring transcripts. The estimate corresponds to the cost of an additional 613 courtroom days for both English and French services.

Staff assessment

39. Staff assessment costs are estimated at $434,500 relating to the general temporary assistance positions reflected in paragraph 36 above. Those costs will be offset by a corresponding amount under income from staff assessment.

V. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

40. **The General Assembly is requested to:**

(a) **Take note of the present report;**

(b) **Approve an additional appropriation in the amount of $16,043,500 gross ($14,979,500 net) for the biennium 2008-2009 to the Special Account for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.**

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Improving the financial situation of the United Nations

Improving the financial situation of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report updates the information on the financial situation of the United Nations contained in the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/62/539/Add.1). It also provides a review of the Organization's financial situation as at 24 October 2008 and updated projections to 31 December 2008.

The report considers four main financial indicators: assessments issued; unpaid assessed contributions; available cash resources; and the Organization's outstanding debt to Member States. At 24 October 2008, assessments issued during 2008 were lower than at 31 December 2007 under all categories except for the international tribunals. Unpaid assessments at 24 October 2008 were higher than at 31 December 2007 for all categories except for the capital master plan.

Cash balances at the end of 2008 are projected to be higher than at the end of 2007 for the tribunals and the capital master plan, but lower for the regular budget and peacekeeping operations. Further borrowing may be required from reserve accounts for the regular budget.

Amounts owed to troop and equipment providers at 31 December 2008 are expected to be significantly lower than the projection made in May, and some $134 million below the amount owed at 31 December 2007. While payments of troop and equipment obligations were broadly current for a number of missions, cash shortfalls mean that reimbursements have fallen behind the normal quarterly reimbursement process for four missions (the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus).

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The financial position of the United Nations remains fragile. Unpaid assessed contributions are heavily concentrated among a few Member States; the final outcome for 2008 will depend in large measure on the payments that they make in the final months of 2008. The only way to overcome the problem and to ensure a more stable financial base for the work of the United Nations is for Member States to meet their financial obligations to the Organization in a fuller and more timely fashion. Otherwise, cash shortfalls are possible.

I. Introduction

1. The present report updates the information on the financial situation of the United Nations contained in the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/62/539/Add.1). It also provides a review of the Organization's financial situation as at 24 October 2008 and updated projections to 31 December 2008.

2. The picture that the above-mentioned information presents of 2008 is generally mixed, mainly owing to borrowing for the regular budget.

3. The financial strength of the United Nations has traditionally been measured by four main indicators: assessments issued; unpaid assessed contributions; available cash resources; and the Organization's outstanding debt to Member States.

II. Review of the financial situation at 24 October 2008

4. A review of the financial situation shows decreases in the level of assessments for the regular budget (from $2,054 million at 31 December 2007 to $1,880 million at 24 October 2008), peacekeeping (from $6,935 million to $6,557 million) and the capital master plan (from $353 million to $341 million). The level of assessments for the international tribunals increased (from $296 million at 31 December 2007 to $310 million at 24 October 2008). As at 24 October 2008, unpaid assessments were higher than at the end of 2007 for all categories, except the capital master plan.

5. The Secretary-General would like to pay a special tribute to the 31 Member States that have paid in full all assessed contributions due and payable at 24 October 2008 for the regular budget, peacekeeping operations, the international tribunals and the capital master plan, namely: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Other Member States are urged to follow the example of those countries.

A. Regular budget

6. Assessments and payments were both lower at 24 October 2008 than at 31 October 2007, by $174 million and $25 million respectively. However, owing to the decrease in assessments exceeding the decrease in payments, unpaid assessed contributions were also lower by $80 million, at $756 million on 24 October 2008, compared with $836 million on 31 October 2007. The decrease in assessments for 2008 is the result of budget adjustments, primarily for special political missions, which were incorporated in assessments for 2007.

7. On a positive note, the number of Member States that had paid their regular budget assessments in full by 24 October 2008 was 133, seven more than on 31 October 2007. The corresponding figure for 31 December 2007 was 140. The Secretary-General wishes to thank the 133 Member States that had honoured their obligations for the regular budget in full at 24 October 2008 and urges other Member States to follow their example.

8. Of the $756 million that remained outstanding at 24 October 2008, 94 per cent was owed by a single Member State and 6 per cent by the remaining Member States. Clearly, the final picture for 2008 will largely depend on the action taken by those countries in the coming few weeks.

9. Cash resources for the regular budget comprise the General Fund, to which assessed contributions are paid; the Working Capital Fund, at present approved at the level of $150 million by the General Assembly; and the Special Account. The final position will also depend in large measure on the action to be taken by the countries referred to above. As at 24 October 2008, the regular budget General Fund had a cash shortfall of $66 million, primarily due to special political mission expenditure levels during the first year of the current biennium, as well as the general weakening of the value of the United States dollar as compared with budgeted exchange rates. Depending on action yet to be taken on a national budget, the situation may worsen and it may be necessary to borrow $148 million from reserve accounts by the end of December 2008. Alternatively, if the major contributor pays the full amount of its 2008 assessment, there could be a positive cash balance at the end of December 2008.

B. Peacekeeping operations

10. The unpredictable nature of the demand for peacekeeping activities makes it hard to predict financial outcomes with any confidence. In addition, peacekeeping has a different financial period, running from 1 July to 30 June rather than from 1 January to 31 December; assessments are issued separately for each operation; and, since assessments can currently be issued only through the mandate period approved by the Security Council for each mission, they are issued for different periods throughout the year. All of these factors complicate a comparison between the financial situation of peacekeeping operations and that of the regular budget and the tribunals.

11. The total amount outstanding for peacekeeping operations at 24 October 2008 was over $2.9 billion. This amount is approximately $198 million higher than at the end of 2007, but it is $575 million below the level at 31 October 2007. The current level of unpaid assessments is, in part, related to the peacekeeping financial cycle. Assessments of $2.7 billion were issued for all active missions at the start of the current peacekeeping financial period in July 2008, and another $1 billion in assessments was issued in August 2008. The $2.9 billion outstanding at 24 October 2008 also includes assessments within the 30-day due period, of approximately $563 million, that were issued on 26 September 2008.

12. As with the regular budget, the $2.9 billion in unpaid assessments as at 24 October 2008 is highly concentrated. Over half of the total, 62 per cent, was from just two Member States, and another 21 per cent was from four other Member States.

13. At 24 October 2008, 31 Member States had paid all peacekeeping assessments that were then outstanding, due and payable, namely: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

14. The cash balance in peacekeeping accounts at 24 October 2008 was some $3.1 billion. This amount was divided between the accounts of a number of ongoing and closed operations and the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund. However, there are restrictions on the use of these resources. In its resolutions on the financing of peacekeeping operations, the General Assembly routinely specifies that no peacekeeping mission shall be financed by borrowing from other active missions. In addition, the terms of reference of the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund restrict its use to new operations and the expansion of existing operations. Further, only some of the cash available in the accounts of closed peacekeeping operations is currently available for cross-borrowing. At 24 October 2008, cash in the accounts of active missions totalled approximately $2.5 billion, the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund had $142 million and the accounts of closed missions had $467 million.

15. Based on information currently available, it is expected that total cash available in peacekeeping accounts at the end of 2008 will total a little less than $2.2 billion, with $1.5 billion in the accounts of active missions, $522 million in the accounts of closed missions and $142 million in the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund. These estimates are based on projected receipts and disbursements.

16. Of the $522 million expected to be available in the accounts of closed peacekeeping operations at the end of this year, $295 million is set aside for amounts to be paid for outstanding liabilities, such as troop and equipment payments and credits to be returned to individual Member States. This leaves only $227 million that is available for possible cross-borrowing by active peacekeeping operations, as well as for other accounts, including the regular budget and the international tribunals. This is a very thin margin for cross-borrowing. Cross-borrowing was required in 2007 for a total of $50 million for five active operations: the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). So far in 2008, cross-borrowing from the accounts of closed peacekeeping operations has been required for a total of $117 million for seven active missions: UNMIK, UNOMIG, MINURSO, UNFICYP, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

C. International tribunals

17. The financial position of the international tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia remained relatively acceptable in 2008. Assessments in 2008 are somewhat higher than those in 2007 and the amount outstanding is slightly lower, by about $11 million.

18. The number of Member States paying their assessed contributions for both international tribunals in full by 24 October 2008 was 97, five more than on 31 October 2007. The Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the 97 Member States that have met their financial obligations to the tribunals in full and urges other Member States to follow their example.

19. The final financial position of the tribunals will obviously depend on the payment of assessed contributions by Member States during the balance of this year.

The breakdown of unpaid assessed contributions for the tribunals shows a high degree of concentration, with one Member State accounting for 85 per cent of the total and the remaining Member States accounting for 15 per cent. Much will depend, therefore, on the action to be taken by those Member States.

20. If recent trends continue, the tribunals should end the year with positive cash balances, although the position of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is expected to be stronger than that of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Once again, however, the actual outcome will depend on Member States meeting their financial obligations to the tribunals in a full and timely fashion.

D. Capital master plan

21. The total budget for the capital master plan project of $1.88 billion was approved by the General Assembly on 22 December 2006 (resolution 61/251).

22. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/251, 180 Member States are under the multi-year payments system and 12 Member States have opted for one-time payment. As at 24 October 2008, 120 Member States had paid in full their capital master plan assessed contributions, and payments totalling $766 million had been made against assessments due and payable, with $80 million still outstanding. In addition, a number of Member States which did not opt for one-time payment have nevertheless made advance payments. As at 24 October 2008, payments to the working capital reserve totalled $44.9 million. In order to ensure the timely execution of the project, all Member States are urged to pay their assessed contributions to the capital master plan in full and on time.

III. Debt to Member States

23. The forecast in May 2008 was that the Organization's debt to Member States providing troops and equipment to peacekeeping operations would be reduced to $728 million. Based on revised projections, it now appears that the amount outstanding at the end of 2008 will be some $645 million, significantly lower than the projection made in May, and well below the amount of $779 million outstanding at 31 December 2007. New obligations in 2008 were up, owing mainly to the deployment of troops in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), partly offset by a reduction of the authorized military strength of UNMIL, lower deployment in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and termination of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The total number of troops and formed police units deployed rose from 74,578 at the end of 2007 to 79,047 at 30 September 2008.

24. Payments of troop obligations were broadly current up to July 2008 for UNMEE and up to August 2008 for nine peacekeeping missions (MINUSTAH, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), UNAMID, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), UNIFIL, UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), and UNOCI). Payments for contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment claims were current up to March 2008 for MINUSTAH and UNOCI and up to June 2008 for seven

peacekeeping operations (MONUC, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, UNIFIL, UNMEE, UNMIL, UNMIS and UNMIT).

25. However, cash shortfalls mean that reimbursements have fallen behind the normal quarterly reimbursement process for four missions (MINURSO, UNMIK, UNOMIG and UNFICYP). In this regard, delays in the receipt of contributions affect the Secretariat's ability to make quarterly payments to troop contributors, as it is necessary to first ensure adequate provision of cash resources to meet ongoing operating cost requirements. The peacekeeping operations cash-flow situation will continue to be monitored constantly, with a view to making quarterly payments as soon as sufficient cash is available.

26. The Secretary-General is committed to meeting the Organization's obligations to Member States providing troops and equipment to peacekeeping operations as expeditiously as possible. The extent to which he can do this, however, will depend on the degree to which Member States meet their financial obligations to the United Nations in full and on time, and on the finalization of memorandums of understanding with troop contributors for provision of equipment.

IV. Conclusions

27. Although the financial situation is expected to show some improvement by the end of 2008, this is very much dependent on receipt of significant payments by the end of the year from a few Member States.

28. The Secretary-General also wishes to pay special tribute to the following Member States that had paid in full all assessments for the regular budget, the international tribunals, the peacekeeping operations and the capital master plan that were due and payable as at 24 October 2008. These were: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand and the United Kingdom. Other Member States are urged to follow the example of those countries.

29. The financial indicators for 2008 are mixed. The position of the regular budget is uncertain given the current and projected cash situation, and the final outcome for 2008 will depend on action to be taken in the next few months by a few Member States. Under current projections, borrowing from reserve accounts may be required in November and December of 2008. Regarding peacekeeping operations, while unpaid assessments show increases as compared with end December 2007, the amount outstanding at 24 October 2008 was below the end October 2007 level. The amount of $2.9 billion still outstanding for peacekeeping operations is considerable. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that further progress could be made in reducing the debt to troop contributors to a level lower than that at the beginning of 2008.

30. In order to maintain the financial health of the Organization, it remains as critical as ever for Member States to meet their financial obligations to the United Nations in full and on time.